

is doing here. I want to thank you on behalf of America for your hard work.

I will see you all tonight.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:02 p.m. in the Cabinet Room at the White House.

Statement on the Back to Work Relief Package

October 11, 2001

I commend Senators Allen and Warner and others for introducing my “Back to Work Relief Package.” I look forward to continuing to work with members of both parties to enact this important relief for dislocated workers across America as soon as possible. This proposal will help get workers who lost their jobs because of the September 11 attacks back to work again.

The President’s News Conference

October 11, 2001

The President. Good evening. Thank you. Good evening. I would like to report to the American people on the state of our war against terror, and then I’ll be happy to take questions from the White House press corps.

One month ago today, innocent citizens from more than 80 nations were attacked and killed, without warning or provocation, in an act that horrified not only every American but every person of every faith and every nation that values human life.

The attack took place on American soil, but it was an attack on the heart and soul of the civilized world. And the world has come together to fight a new and different war, the first, and we hope the only one, of the 21st century, a war against all those who seek to export terror and a war against those governments that support or shelter them.

We’ve accomplished a great deal in one month. Our staunch friends, Great Britain, our neighbors Canada and Mexico, our NATO Allies, our allies in Asia, Russia, and nations from every continent on the Earth have offered help of one kind or another, from military assistance to intelligence information, to crack down on terrorists’ financial networks. This week 56 Islamic nations

issued a statement strongly condemning the savage acts of terror and emphasizing that those acts contradict the peaceful teachings of Islam.

All is strong and united on the diplomatic front. The men and women of the United States military are doing their duty with skill and success. We have ruined terrorist training camps, disrupted their communications, weakened the Taliban military, and destroyed most of their air defenses.

We’re mounting a sustained campaign to drive the terrorists out of their hidden caves and to bring them to justice. All missions are being executed according to plan on the military front. At the same time, we are showing the compassion of America by delivering food and medicine to the Afghan people, who are, themselves, the victims of a repressive regime.

On the law enforcement front, terrorists are being swept up in an international dragnet. Several hundred have been arrested. Thousands of FBI agents are on the trail of other suspects here and abroad. Working with countries around the world, we have frozen more than \$24 million in Al Qaida or Taliban assets.

We are aggressively pursuing the agents of terror around the world, and we are aggressively strengthening our protections here at home. This week we established America’s new Office of Homeland Security, directed by former Governor Tom Ridge. Americans tonight can know that while the threat is ongoing, we are taking every possible step to protect our country from danger.

Your Government is doing everything we can to recover from these attacks and to try to prevent others. We’re acting to make planes and airports safer, rebuild New York and the Pentagon. We must act to stimulate a slow economy, to help laid-off workers, and we must fund our military.

This is a time of testing—this time of testing has revealed the true character of the American people. We’re angry at the evil that was done to us, yet patient and just in our response.

Before September 11th, my administration was planning an initiative called Communities of Character. It was designed to help